



# EMBARK ON AN EXPEDITION

EXPEDITION AND ADVENTURE CRUISING PROVIDES  
CLIENTS WITH THE EXCITEMENT OF EXPLORATION  
COMBINED WITH THE COMFORT OF CRUISING

BY JEANNINE WILLIAMSON

**A** world away from formal nights, Broadway-style shows, multiple dining rooms and the familiar trappings of traditional cruising, expedition cruises will suit clients who want to sail into more adventurous waters.

From Alaska, the Arctic and Antarctica to thrilling Zodiac tours for close-up wildlife encounters - and with destinations such as the Galapagos and South Pacific in between - the A to Z of expedition cruises will take passengers off the beaten track. Equally appealing to seasoned cruisers looking for something different and customers who usually opt for land tours, they cover everything from science-led journeys to remote locations to 'softer' options, such as small-ship cruises into narrow Norwegian fjords with the opportunity to go kayaking and hiking.

"Many clients are becoming much more adventurous when it comes to choosing holidays," said Andy Harmer, CLIA Europe, vice president operations. "This is reflected in

cruise lines investing heavily in new expedition ships to take guests to far-flung destinations around the world."

Taking expedition cruising to new heights - and depths - will be Scenic Eclipse. The river cruise line is entering the ocean market, and Eclipse, launching in August 2018, is now available for booking. The ultra-luxurious 228-passenger vessel will have two helicopters, a six-person submarine and a fleet of Zodiacs.

Another eagerly awaited ship is Silversea's new flagship Silver Muse, launching in April 2017. The 596-passenger vessel's maiden season will include a 66-day South America circular voyage leading in from £23,122pp cruise only. Looking ahead to 2018, Crystal will launch its first-ever expedition mega-yacht, Crystal Endeavor, designed for global expedition in Arctic, Antarctic and tropical conditions.

Operators are upping their product offering with new itineraries and destinations. New 2017 cruises from Quark Expeditions on the small expedition ship Sea Adventurer are the 17-night Arctic Circle Traverse, exploring remote regions of Iceland,

Greenland and Canada, and a 12-night Canada to Greenland cruise, taking in islands only inhabited by Arctic creatures such as walrus and polar bears.

Titan Travel has teamed up with Azamara to offer two new cruises in 2017, including a 13-night Costa Rica and Panama Canal itinerary. Next year Crystal Cruises will return to the famed Northwest Passage with Crystal Serenity sailing a 32-night expedition-style voyage traversing the Arctic Ocean via the route first completed successfully by Roald Amundsen more than 100 years ago.

Whether clients are in search of penguins or polar bears, G Adventures offers a variety of seven to 20-night G Expedition cruises. Managing director Brian Young said: "Travellers are no longer satisfied with a week on the beach, and in the same way G Adventures provides cultural immersion trips on land, we provide them on water, too."

Small group tour specialist Grand American Adventures has a 14-night adventure cruise into the heart of Alaska's Inside Passage, with kayaking amongst icebergs and





numerous wildlife encounters, which is well suited to the solo travellers that make up a large proportion of its clientele.

Last Frontiers recently debuted the 20-passenger luxury motor yacht MV Origin, specifically designed for Galapagos cruising, and a seven-night cruise is combined with two nights in the Ecuadorian capital Quito. The operator also features the intimate 68-passenger Antarctic vessel Ocean Nova, which is used for five-night sailings as part of its 13-night Antarctica fly/cruise itinerary.

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This November and December Hapag-Lloyd Cruises offers the opportunity to follow in the wake of explorers James Cook and Ferdinand Magellan with the 23-night Expedition to the South Seas and Easter Island cruise on the 175-passenger MS Hanseatic. Highlights include the Tuamotu Islands, the world's largest archipelago, and Easter Island's renowned stone sculptures.

For something different, there's the new Aranui 5, which has been called 'the freighter to paradise'. Carrying 254 passengers, it also delivers cargo and is the only South Pacific vessel to travel the 2,200-mile trip from Papeete in Tahiti to all six inhabited Marquesas Islands.

"Guests can now choose from 19 expeditions each year to some of the most remote islands in the world," said Eric Wong, Aranui's executive vice president.

For clients who enjoy their thrills on dry land, Celebrity Cruises' Celebrity Constellation is home porting in Abu Dhabi for its 2016/17 season and a new Great Adventure shore excursion has been launched in conjunction with TV celebrity and adventurer Ben Fogle. It includes a 4x4 jeep safari, camel ride across the desert and sandboarding on the dunes.

Closer to home, the Majestic Line has a brand new 12-passenger vessel, The Glen Etive, offering 10-night cruises to the isolated parts of the Isle of

Skye, the Outer Hebrides and St Kilda.

Finally, for clients that want to sail from the UK there are two new round-trip cruises aboard Fred. Olsen's Black Watch for 2017. The 27-night Exploring the Fjords of the Arctic itinerary, taking in the secluded Faroe Islands, sails from Dover, and the 13-night Greenland, Iceland & Norway Exploration cruise sails from Rosyth.



Aranui Nuku  
Hiva, Tahiti

MS Hanseatic,  
Pitcairn

Crystal  
Endeavor



#### SCENIC

offers an 11-night round-trip Antarctic itinerary from Argentina on Scenic Eclipse, which will include crossing Drake Passage and cruising the Antarctic Peninsula, departing December 5, 2018, from £7,745pp cruise only. The special preview includes all meals, drinks, butler service and tips. 0808 231 2942 [scenic.co.uk/eclipse](http://scenic.co.uk/eclipse)

#### SELL IT

#### TITAN TRAVEL

has a new 21-night Temples, Dragons and the Great Barrier Reef itinerary sailing from Bali to Australia on Azamara Journey, departing January 30, 2017, from £4,799pp, including flights and Titan's VIP Home Departure Service. 0800 988 5166 [titanagents.co.uk](http://titanagents.co.uk)

#### CELEBRITY CRUISES

offers a 10-night Galapagos fly/cruise on Celebrity Xpedition, departing October 5 and priced from £4,159pp, and including flights from Heathrow, three nights' land-based accommodation and a seven-night cruise. 0845 456 0523 [celebritycruises.co.uk](http://celebritycruises.co.uk)

#### SALES TIPS

- 1 The newest expedition ships are big on creature comforts so clients don't have to rough it.
- 2 Norway, Greenland and Iceland are ideal 'soft adventure' destinations for passengers new to adventure cruising, with the added bonus of ex-UK sailings.
- 3 The very different nature of adventure cruising offers opportunities to switch-sell to clients who would not normally consider ocean cruises.
- 4 No longer aimed at mature, well-travelled passengers, many lines now offer dedicated family sailings with child-friendly talks and activities.
- 5 Adventure cruises are more relaxing than land tours and cover several destinations without tiring transfers and constant packing and unpacking.